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Security Council

Sixtieth year

Provisional

5169th meeting

Tuesday, 26 April 2005, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Wang Guangya	(China)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Baali
	Argentina	Mr. Mayoral
	Benin	Mr. Adechi
	Brazil	Mr. Sardenberg
	Denmark	Ms. Løj
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Greece	Mr. Vassilakis
	Japan	Mr. Kitaoka
	Philippines	Mr. Mercado
	Romania	Mr. Dumitru
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Maniga
	United States of America	Mr. Fendrick

Agenda

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

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05-32192 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Djangoné-Bi (Côte d'Ivoire) and Mr. Adekanye (Nigeria) took seats at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure and with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, the Council has agreed to extend an invitation to His Excellency Mr. Aziz Pahad, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of South Africa.

On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Aziz Pahad.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Pahad (South Africa) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2005/186, which contains the fourth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire.

I wish to draw the attention of members to photocopies of a letter dated 25 April 2005 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa addressed to the President of the Security Council, which will issued as document S/2005/270.

I now give the floor to Mr. Aziz Pahad, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of South Africa.

Mr. Pahad (South Africa): Allow us to thank you, Mr. President, for inviting the African Union mediation mission to brief the Security Council once again on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire.

On 28 March 2005, we informed the Security Council about the efforts that the African Union (AU) had undertaken to contribute to the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire (see S/PV.5152). On that occasion, we also informed the Council that the AU mediator, President Mbeki, was to convene an important meeting of the Ivorian leaders in Pretoria on 3 April 2005. We are happy to report that the meeting took place as scheduled, lasting for three days. Present at the meeting were President Gbagbo, former President Bedie, former Prime Minister Ouattara, Secretary-General Soro of the Forces nouvelles and Prime Minister Diarra. All of the principals were supported by their senior leaders, advisers and officials.

The outcome of the three-day meeting was the Pretoria Agreement, which the mediator has presented to the Council, requesting that it be endorsed and circulated as an official document of the Security Council. Without a doubt, the Pretoria Agreement represents new hope for the Ivorian people — who have long been yearning for a return to peace and stability in their country — and has brought a new urgency to the implementation of previous undertakings.

The Pretoria meeting was held in a very cordial and relaxed atmosphere. President Mbeki chaired the meeting and participated actively in the discussions. At times, the Ivorian leaders used the opportunity to have discussions among themselves on some of the long-standing and contentious issues. That in itself was a significant achievement, since these are parties that have not had the opportunity to exchange views in a long time.

Some of the key areas addressed by the Pretoria Agreement include the following. First is the joint declaration of the end of war, in which the Ivorian parties that are signatories to the Agreement declare their immediate and final cessation of all hostilities in their country. Second is the disarmament and dismantling of the militia throughout the country. Third is the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of the armed formations, leading to the creation

of one army for the whole of Côte d'Ivoire. Fourth is ensuring security in the area under the Forces nouvelles. Fifth is the acceptance of a plan for the security of the Forces nouvelles ministers of the Government of National Reconciliation. Sixth, the parties that are signatories further committed themselves to making amendments to the composition, organization and functioning of the Independent Electoral Commission to ensure free, fair and transparent elections by 31 October 2005. Here, we must note that the parties requested the mediator to seek the assistance of the United Nations in the electoral process. Seventh, the agreement recognizes the important role of the media — particularly the Ivorian Radio and Television (RTI) — and agrees that the programming of the radio and television stations should cover the entire territory of Côte d'Ivoire. Eighth, the meeting discussed the finalization of the adoption of article 35 of the Ivorian Constitution. In that regard, the mediator was asked to make a determination on the matter after consulting with the Chairperson of the African Union and with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Let me now briefly indicate some of the progress that has been made since the signing of the Pretoria Agreement.

With regard to the very important issue of article 35, the letter setting out the mediator's determination on the article has also been presented to the Security Council with a request from the mediator that its contents also be endorsed and circulated as a document of the Council. The essence of the determination is that President Gbagbo would, after consulting with the President of the National Assembly and the Ivorian Constitutional Council, use article 48 of the Constitution, which would allow the Constitutional Council to accept the eligibility of the candidates who would be presented by the political parties that were signatories to the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement. Once the mediator communicated the determination to the Ivorian leaders, President Gbagbo engaged the broader Ivorian population in order to enlist their support for the determination. President Mbeki agreed with that approach.

President Gbagbo undertook a series of consultations with, among others, youth groups, trade unions, women's groups, traditional chiefs, members of Parliament and the military with a view to discussing the Pretoria Agreement and President Mbeki's determination. That process was instructive in that it provided a platform for the airing of different views — something that can benefit the democratic process in Côte d'Ivoire. The central message coming from all those groups is that President Gbagbo should, in the interests of peace, use article 48 to effect the amendment of the Constitution as determined by the mediator. It is expected that President Gbagbo will make a statement on article 35 soon.

Regarding the issue of the DDR process, the chiefs of staff of the National Armed Forces of Côte d'Ivoire (FANCI) and of the Armed Forces of Forces Nouvelles (FAFN) met on Thursday, 14 April 2005, as agreed in the Pretoria Agreement. The Prime Minister was accompanied by several ministers, who witnessed the event. A communiqué was issued at the end of the meeting of 16 April 2005 endorsing Pretoria's decision to renew contact between the two sides as well as the withdrawal of heavy weapons from the front line, and setting 15 May as the date for the commencement of the DDR process. The chiefs of staff have since held several meetings — some in the north and others in the south — to work out modalities for the implementation of the commitments made at Bouaké. The DDR programme started with the removal of heavy weapons from the front line, with effect from 21 April 2005. We believe that that development — which in itself symbolizes the beginning of the integration of the country — has enjoyed widespread support from the population and has generated new confidence in the peace process.

As part of our contribution to the peace process, the South African National Defence Force has invited the chiefs of staff to Pretoria to share with them our experience in the integration of armed forces. It is hoped that that step will consolidate the developing cooperation between the officers. The chiefs of staff, accompanied by five senior members from each side, arrived in Pretoria this morning and will begin their discussions sometime today.

In relation to the amendments to legislation, the Council of Ministers has started deliberations on the amendments necessary to ensure that the laws adopted comply with the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement and with the determination of the mediator in that regard.

Concerning the issue of the participation of Forces nouvelles ministers in the Government of National Reconciliation, we are happy to note that an

increasing number of ministers from the Forces nouvelles have returned to Abidjan to assume their ministerial responsibilities, including attending meetings of the Government of National Reconciliation. The specialized unit of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), in conjunction with the mediation, is working out additional measures for Mr. Soro aimed at ensuring his return to Abidjan so that he can take up his ministerial responsibilities.

I now turn to the issue of training units to provide close protection for ministers. In an attempt to contribute to the resumption of the functioning of the Government of National Reconciliation, the mediation has, at its own cost, undertaken to train members of the close protection units of all Forces nouvelles ministers. That training will take place in South Africa over a period of six weeks, starting on 2 May 2005. The training programme will also be open to protectors from the south, totalling approximately 135 personnel. We believe it is important that UNOCI work out modalities to complement that effort.

Regarding the role of the media, RTI has toned down its negative reporting and has begun to broadcast positive reports on the Pretoria Agreement and on its implementation. It is hoped that the situation will improve further once the amendments, as envisaged in the Pretoria Agreement, have been completed. Efforts are being made to procure technical equipment to upgrade systems and to ensure coverage of the entire country by RTI.

Let me now address the progress made with regard to some of the requests that we would like to present to the Security Council. There are two main areas in which the Ivorian leaders have asked the United Nations, through the Security Council, to urgently assist them. Those areas cover elections and security.

As we stated in our March presentation, any situation of protracted conflict, such as that in Côte d'Ivoire, invariably results in deep-seated mistrust among the political players. The request for United Nations assistance is informed by the need to ensure confidence as the Ivorians take the final steps towards the holding of elections in a peaceful and secure environment. All the Ivorian parties are intent on holding elections by 31 October 2005. The AU and the mediator support that view and hope that the United Nations will be ready to play its part in contributing to such an outcome.

On the issue of elections, the Ivorian leadership has, through the Pretoria Agreement, asked the mediator to request the United Nations to establish an impartial structure that would assist the Ivorians during the entire electoral period. It is envisaged that such a structure would assist the Ivorian Independent Electoral Commission, as well as the Constitutional Council, in the discharge of their functions, without being part of the two structures.

In the context of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement, the United Nations impartial structure would also assist in the process of streamlining the issuing of nationality documents and identity cards. The structure, it is hoped, would be empowered to assist both in the formulation and in the execution of policies and plans for the elections. It would be set up immediately and be required to intervene with the relevant Ivorian authorities where necessary.

On the issue of security, the Ivorian leaders ask for assistance in three areas that the mediator also supports.

First, it is necessary to protect the Forces nouvelles cantonment sites. The Security Council would need to consider the deployment of a special force under UNOCI to carry out that function. The presence of such a force would contribute to building confidence in the DDR process, which is critical to a peaceful transition in Côte d'Ivoire.

Secondly, the Ivorians request — and the mediator concurs — that assistance be made available for the recruitment, training and deployment of a police contingent of 600 personnel in the north, in order to avoid a security vacuum once the Forces nouvelles forces move into cantonment areas. It is envisaged in the Pretoria Agreement that the 600 recruits would undergo abridged training conducted by UNOCI. The new recruits would be mentored by UNOCI and serve under the guidance of the United Nations forces. Once normal policing has been restored in the north, those recruits would go back to the police and Gendarmerie academy for further training.

Thirdly, the assistance of the United Nations is sought with regard to the disarmament of the militias. The United Nations has the needed expertise to assist the Prime Minister in carrying out that objective.

Successful outcomes to those requests can be achieved only if the United Nations and the international community are ready to act decisively and urgently in support of the developments by, first, adjusting the mandate of UNOCI to cater for the election supervision mechanism and to support the disarmament of the militia; secondly, increasing the capacity of UNOCI to carry out the additional tasks emanating from the Pretoria Agreement; thirdly, actively participating in the policing functions in the north during the interim period; and fourthly, providing adequate and immediate funding for the DDR process.

In conclusion, let me say that once again we thank the Council for having afforded us the opportunity to brief it on the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire. As mediation, we are determined to ensure that elections take place as agreed, and we implore the Security Council to take the necessary decisions and steps to realize that objective.

We are confident that, working together, we can assist the Ivorian people as they search for an end to the crisis prevailing in their country. The African Union stands ready to act together with the Council to ensure that we realize this outcome for the benefit of the Ivorian people.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Nigeria. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Adekanye (Nigeria): I have the honour to address the Security Council on behalf of the Chairman of the African Union, President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, on the issue of the African Union (AU) mediation mission in Côte d'Ivoire, led by President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa. I am glad that this meeting is taking place under the presidency of China, a country with which Nigeria enjoys very warm relations.

May I also seize this opportunity to thank the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of South Africa, Mr. Aziz Pahad, for his very detailed and informative report. It is indeed gratifying that Mr. Pahad is appearing before the Council for the second time in 30 days. This is testimony to the commitment of the African Union and, in particular, of its mediation mission to peace and stability in Côte d'Ivoire.

Nigeria identifies with the briefing just made by Mr. Pahad and, in that regard, is grateful to President Mbeki for the efforts he has exerted and for his commitment to peace, which, happily, have resulted in the Pretoria Agreement. Those efforts point to an unwavering faith in the capacity of the AU to find a peaceful solution to the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire.

The latest agreement signed in Pretoria by all the parties to the conflict marks an important milestone in the AU's efforts to find a peaceful solution to the crisis. We welcome the reaffirmation by the parties to the conflict of their commitment to the peace process, as provided for in earlier Agreements, namely the Linas-Marcoussis and Accra II and III Agreements. We note also that they have undertaken to follow and implement the road map elaborated by the AU mediator and endorsed by the African Union as well as to commit themselves to the October 2005 elections. Furthermore, in the Agreement the parties

> "solemnly declare the immediate and final cessation of all hostilities and the end of the war throughout the national territory."

These are indeed important undertakings, freely entered into by the parties.

Undoubtedly, the Agreement addresses whatever gaps existed in earlier ones. To reinforce this, concrete actions are needed. First, the leaders of the various parties to the conflict must go beyond merely appending their signatures to the document. They must display practical leadership qualities, including the political will to accommodate dissension. They must also show a readiness, when necessary, to make sacrifices for the common good. The long-suffering people of Côte d'Ivoire must no longer be made to pay the price for political differences among the parties.

We believe that the Pretoria Agreement offers the Ivorian leadership an opportunity to demonstrate their oft-repeated commitment to the interests of their fellow citizens by ensuring the faithful implementation of its provisions. It is also incumbent on the leadership to mobilize support at the grass-roots level for such peace efforts.

Secondly, the United Nations presence in Côte d'Ivoire should be strengthened and become visible throughout the length and breadth of the country. That would bolster confidence and trust among the parties